

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
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Testimony Supporting Senate Bill No. 951

AN ACT CONSOLIDATING
CRIMINAL JUSTICE, JUVENILE AND FAMILY SERVICE PROGRAMS

Senator Coleman, Representative Tong and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on Senate Bill No. 951, An Act Consolidating Criminal Justice, Juvenile and Family Service Programs.

This bill transfers certain functions, powers, duties and personnel of the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Department to the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Department of Correction (DOC) and the Office of Victim Services (also within the Judicial Department), effective July 1, 2015. It is intended to complement Governor Malloy's Second Chance Society Initiative; Senate Bill No. 952 also has been heard by this Committee.

The intent of these transfers is to realign functions based on specialization. The DCF would assume responsibility for the juvenile justice and family services programs of CSSD and the DOC would assume the adult services programming. These transfers are consistent with the DCF's mission to serve children and families, and the DOC's role in serving adults involved in the criminal justice system. With the elimination of duplicative functions and contracted services and the potential for additional shared services – and with no layoffs of state employees – we anticipate spending reductions of at least \$20.7 million.

We acknowledge the challenges presented by the proposals contained within Senate Bill No. 951, and that this is indeed a work in progress, necessarily aligned to other work, such as that of the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Commission (CJPAC), the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC), and many other existing alliances and efforts around these issues. Indeed, the areas addressed in the bill are likely to narrow in the coming weeks as we learn more and narrow our focus.

We remain committed to developing proposals that serve our residents, whether juvenile or adult, and their families well, and to making sure that our work, and taxpayers' funds, serves that purpose effectively and efficiently.

We welcome the expected ongoing discussion on this proposal. And, we anticipate that this discussion will focus on particular areas.

For example, the Nov. 13, 2014 OPM Report on Purchase of Service Contracts indicates that there are 123 agreements held by the DCF, funded by \$183.7 million from the general fund; 36 agreements held by the DOC, funded by \$41.5 million from the general fund; and 265 agreements held by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), funded by \$270 million from the general fund. The report also lists agreements held by the Departments of Developmental Services, Housing, Public Health, Social Services, and Rehabilitation Services; the State Department on Aging, and the Office of Early Childhood. Many providers enter into agreements with multiple state agencies, and some of these same agencies utilize collaborative contracting. The CSSD also enters into agreements with various providers, some independently of other state agencies and some in collaboration. We anticipate taking the opportunity to explore this area with several state agencies and CSSD; we believe we can identify additional opportunities for collaboration, sharing of services, and streamlining. Common purchased services include, but are not limited to, residential programming, community-based treatment and behavioral health services. We intend to explore the potential overlap between the Alternative Incarceration Program operated by the CSSD and the programs contracted for by the DOC, in terms of services, how rates may differ for identical services, and the unnecessary complication of the contracting process. We will be working with the Judicial Department on lockups. Additional co-locations for facilities could also be possible. And joint training efforts are underway in some instances, and being discussed in others.

As we look at the continuum of services and needs in juvenile justice, we will highlight residential services: the two state-operated detention centers, located in Bridgeport and Hartford, the CSSD's contracted residential programs that meet the needs of juveniles who come into contact with the juvenile court system, the DCF's two secure facilities for committed delinquents, and the DCF's contracts with a number of different residential and/or treatment centers to treat youth in the juvenile justice system whose behavioral health needs are too acute to address in the community or who cannot be treated in the community because of family or legal issues. Congregate care will also be included in the review.

We look forward to gathering additional information, developing additional options and improving services for juveniles and adult offenders collaboratively. Thank you.